

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

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C O N F I D E N T I A L NIAMEY 5459

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, EAID, NG

SUBJ: US-NIGER COOPERATION

1. I PRESENTED COURTESY COPIES OF MY CREDENTIALS TO ACTING FOREIGN MINISTER MOUNKEILA DECEMBER 10. AFTER EXCHANGE OF COURTESIES, MOUNKEILA TURNED TO SUBJECT OF US-NIGER COOPERATION, ASKING ME TO CONVEY TO WASHINGTON ONCE AGAIN GON'S LASTING GRATITUDE FOR OUR ROLE DURING DROUGHT AND AID PROJECTS NOW IN PROSPECT HERE. GON, MOUNKEILA SAID, DOES NOT VIEW COOPERATION AS JUST A MATTER OF HOLDING OUT ITS HAND BUT RATHER AS A TWO-WAY STREET IN WHICH NIGER HOPED TO MAKE ITS CONTRIBUTION AS WELL. WE ARE, MOUNKEILA CONTINUED, A POOR COUNTRY AND PERHAPS HAVE LITTLE TO OFFER; NEVERTHELESS, THERE ARE THINGS FROM TIME TO TIME WHICH NIGER CAN DO. HE EXPRESSED HOPE US WOULD CONTINUE BRINGING SUCH MATTERS TO GON'S ATTENTION IN SPIRIT OF FRANK AND OPEN DIALOGUE.

2. MOUNKEILA SAID WE ARE PRESENTLY COOPERATING ON MORE OR LESS PROJECT-BY-PROJECT BASIS. GON HOPES THROUGH BI-LATERAL TALKS TO ESTABLISH WHAT HE DESCRIBED AS LONGER TERM FRAMEWORK IN WHICH PLANNING AND FINANCING OVER PERIODS RANGING UP TO SEVERAL YEARS CAN BE DISCUSSED. HE CONCLUDED BY MAKING VEILED PTCH ONCE AGAIN FOR MORE FORMAL STRUCTURE OF US-NIGER BILATERAL TALKS ALONG LINES OF WRITTEN AGREEMENTS WHICH ALREADY EXIST WITH OTHER DONORS SUCH AS FRANCE, CANADA, AND BELGIUM.

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3. I THANKED MOUNKEILA WARMLY FOR HIS OBSERVATIONS
ON COOPERATION, NOTING THAT WE SEE IT AS A TWO-WAY
STREET AS WELL. WE WANTED TO CONTINUE DISCUSSING
MULTI-LATERAL ISSUES, FOR EXAMPLE, IN THIS SPIRIT.
I INDICATED WE ARE NOW LOOKING FORWARD TO NEXT
ROUND OF BI-LATERAL TALKS. JAMES

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